



## Special Edition: Southern Criminology

### Guest Editors' Introduction

**Russell Hogg**

Queensland University of Technology, Australia

**John Scott**

Queensland University of Technology, Australia

**Máximo Sozzo**

Universidad Nacional del Litoral, Argentina; Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Knowledge is a commodity and knowledge production does not occur in a geo-political vacuum. With respect to this, it has to be argued that neo-imperialism involves economic and knowledge flows across continuous space, which is transnational and distinct from the old forms of colonialism which were based on country-to-country occupation. In the context of contemporary geo-politics, these conditions render territorial terrain as less important than discursive terrain (Lo 2011).

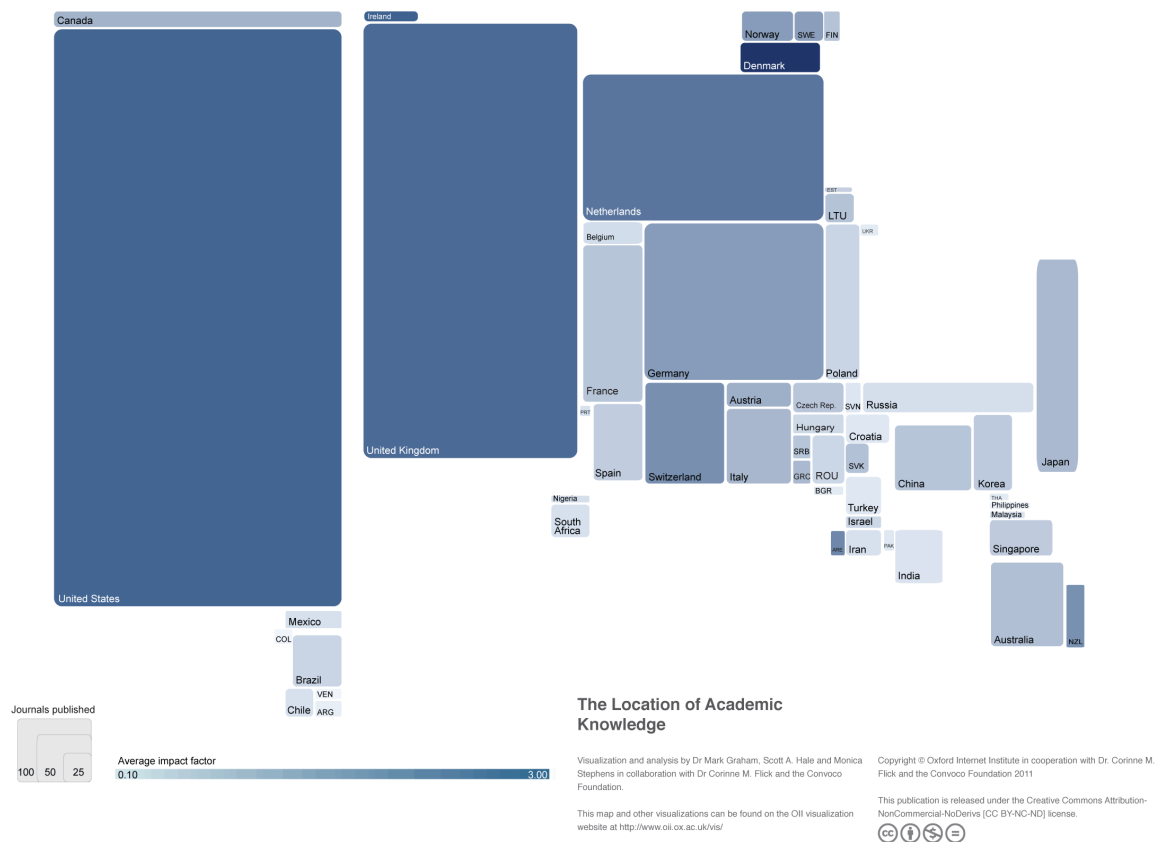
So, how is global knowledge in the social sciences (and more specifically in criminology) produced and shared? Where does this production take place? Who are the producers? Whose experiences and whose voices are reflected in dominant academic discourses? How is knowledge disseminated and who gets access to it? These are some of the questions that the project of southern criminology seeks to tackle.

Intellectual projects are intimately related to political and cultural struggles for recognition and social and economic justice. Boaventura de Sousa Santos observes 'there is no global social justice without global cognitive justice' (2014: viii). There are many ways of knowing the world and intellectual diversity should be welcomed, both as valuable in itself and as integral to building a just world. And yet, Altbach's (1987) centre-periphery model observes that academic resources are unevenly distributed globally, with Anglo-American universities occupying and controlling most of the means of knowledge production, whereas the developing world occupies a position as consumer and follower. As Raewyn Connell (2007) argues the global production of knowledge in the social sciences is, like the distribution of wealth, income and power, structurally skewed towards the global North. Indeed, the influence of North Atlantic countries over knowledge production is even greater in higher education than that exerted in trading and financial economies (Marginson 2014).

This much is glaringly apparent if you only consider the graphic representation of the location of academic knowledge in Figure 1. Graham, Hale and Stephens (2011) depict the geographical distribution of Journal Citation Reports (JCR) in science and social science journals and impacts based on the highly influential Web of Knowledge from 2009. The list (of course) is not exhaustive

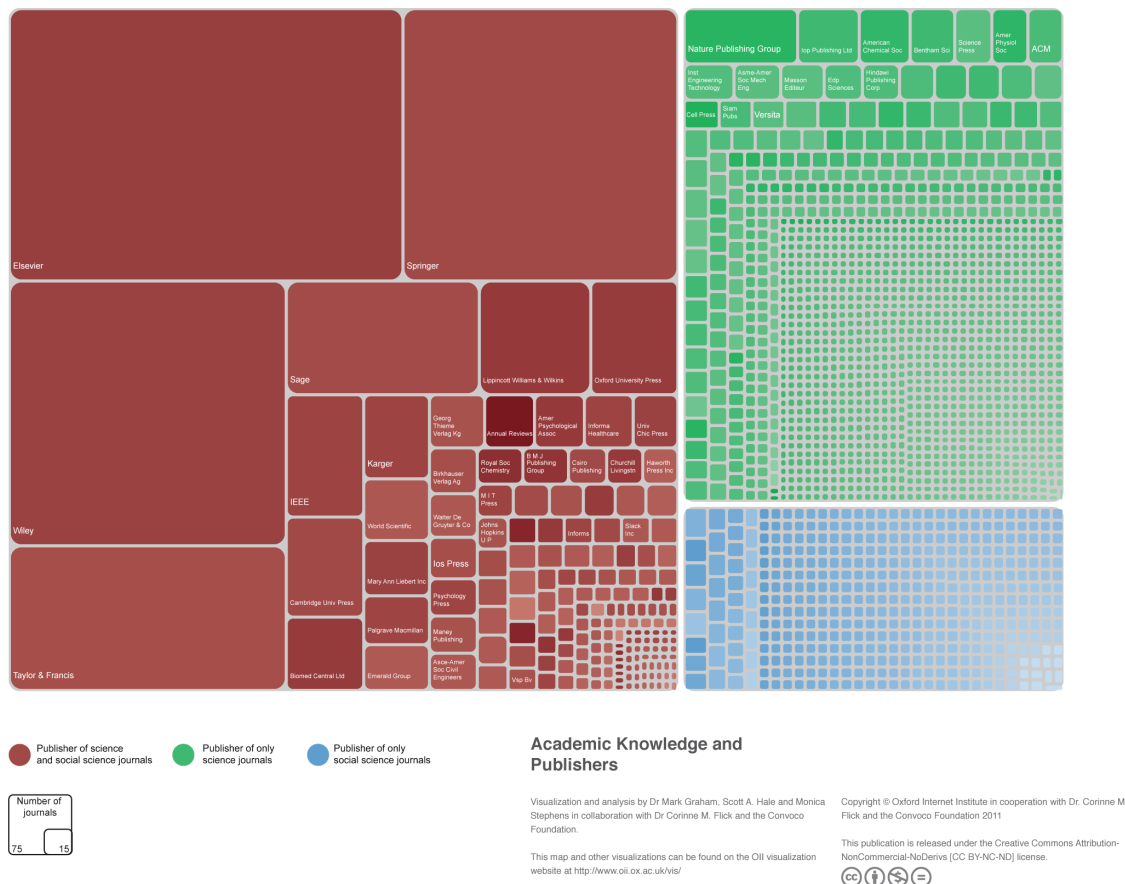
but the JCR does play a vital role in relation to academic standing and the ranking of institutions and individuals. The size of each box represents the number of journals published in the country and the shading reflects the average impact of the country's journals (based on citations of articles in that country's journals: the darker the box the greater the impact). Two features are obvious: the dominance of both the North Atlantic world and that of the Anglophone countries. As the authors observe, there is 'a staggering amount of inequality in the geographical distribution of academic knowledge. The United States and the United Kingdom publish more indexed journals than the rest of the world combined' (Graham, Hale and Stephens 2011: 14).

Other visualisations in the study further illuminate fundamental inequalities in relation to the production, sharing and accessing of knowledge. As is more widely appreciated across the global South, there remain major concentrations of adult illiteracy which intersect with other vectors of inequality: women, for example, have a significantly higher rate of illiteracy than men. The authors don't look at public expenditures on education, but these also clearly determine participation in the production and sharing of knowledge. UNESCO figures for 2004 indicate that North America and Western Europe accounted for over 55 per cent of global public expenditure on education, with only 7.6 per cent spent in Latin America and the Caribbean and a miniscule 2.4 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa (cited in Roberts 2009: 290). The spread of the Internet potentially increases access to knowledge, at least for educated populations, but Internet penetration is also (and unsurprisingly) highly uneven, there being an 'archipelago of disconnection' across Sub-Saharan Africa where penetration rates are below 10 per cent (see Straumann and Graham 2016). The global digital divide exists largely on a North-South axis. In 2014 China, the United States and Japan hosted 50 per cent of global bandwidth potential (see Hilbert 2016).



**Figure 1: The location of academic knowledge**  
Source: Graham, Hale and Stephens 2011: 15

Graham, Hale and Stephens (2011) also depict the clustering of academic journal publishers in the Web of Knowledge index for the sciences and social sciences (see Figure 2). A political economy of knowledge here is indicative of North/South inequalities. While there are a large number of journal publishers represented in the index, there are a few dominant actors, especially amongst those publishers that publish both science and social science journals. The biggest publisher, Elsevier (the academic journal division of the RELX Group), is currently subject of complaints that it has abused its dominant market position. Others point to serious problems in the academic publishing market where analytics (like citation metrics) used by universities to assess the standing of journals, institutions and individual academics are controlled by large publishers such as Elsevier, while being part-based on their own journals. Thus, another thread is constituted in the growing corporatisation of knowledge and the university and individual academics are, if they are to advance their careers, under pressure to publish in journals whose 'high ranking' may be more an artefact of economic power than academic quality (Larivière, Haustein and Mongeon 2015). In this way, knowledge is further concentrated under the control of fewer hands and driven by economic motives. Moreover, metrics and journal rankings intensify the pressures for individual academics in the global South to publish in metropolitan journals and submit to the intellectual cultures and frameworks dominant in the global North.



**Figure 2: Academic knowledge and publishers**  
Source: Graham et al. 2011: 19

The Australian experience is illustrative of this process. In 2010 an Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) policy was implemented, largely modelled on the Research Assessment Exercise, which had been introduced in Britain in 1986. Among the various measures of quality included in the ERA was a tiered journal ranking system. Journals which were deemed high quality were almost exclusively Anglo-American and were ranked based on measures which clearly favoured established journals, such as impact factors on citation measures. Driven by economies of scale, citations clearly advantaged international journals in other English speaking countries and disadvantaged Australian journals.

Specifically, journals in the social sciences that were valued at the national level communication outlets performed poorly when considered under citation analysis. The local focus of Australian social science journals, their lower circulation and poorer coverage by major abstracting and indexing services based in the global North, were all factors which diminished their impact factor ranking when compared to established Anglo-American journals (Royle 1994). Research has also found that Australian social scientists, when compared to those working in the natural sciences, were more likely to publish in local journals with a national focus. In this way, citations may reflect the communication behaviour of scholars in a particular field or geographic location (Haddow and Genoni 2010). Thus, the ERA exercise posed a threat to the viability of locally produced knowledge and, ultimately, reinforced traditional structures of knowledge production at the very time when such structures were being challenged by telecommunications technologies which promised to democratise publishing in the form of online journals. Australian academic staff were advised by management not to submit to lower ranked local journals. The policy also weakened demand for locally produced data supplied by government agencies and policy institutes (Chapman 2011).

This latter point directs us to the issue that is more fundamental to Connell's argument concerning southern theory than the sheer quantitative preponderance of the North in the production and dissemination of knowledge. The formation of the modern social sciences was intimately related, not merely to the endogenous problems and questions posed by the advent of urban, industrial societies in the European metropole, but also to the imperial context and character of this global transformation. Northern dominance was derived from the colonisation of the life worlds of other societies, which from the very outset constituted an essential feature of the making and extension of a capitalist economic and social order (Beckert 2014). Entrenched development and modernization paradigms, in which northern dominance is seen to rest on the North providing a modernizing trail that others were bound to follow if they were to be successful, obscures this basic fact. This also conditioned the way ideas, perspectives, theories, problematics and methods peculiar to the history and experience of a small number of northern societies became hegemonic, managing to present themselves as universal, placeless and providing *the* rational foundation of social scientific knowledge production across the globe.

As Connell (2007) argues this severely circumscribed the place of the South in the production of knowledge, reducing it to a handful of subordinate roles, providing a rich data mine for northern researchers or a mere empirical testing ground for northern theory. Ideas and theory only travelled on a one-way ticket. Accepting their place in the global division of knowledge production, southern thinkers and researchers looked to outside sources, undertaking their research projects using theories and methods imported from the North and producing knowledge that was usually regarded as of local interest only. Intellectual engagement in and with the metropole would be conducted on northern terms, within northern theoretical frameworks and debates, in which intellectuals were required to estrange themselves from their own societies.

To what extent might we consider the control and influence of the global North, and specifically that of Anglo-America, over the production of knowledge as hegemonic? As suggested above, there are material and ideological consequences related to the geo-politics of knowledge production. Universities, to take one example, are important sources of status and reputation for

contemporary nation-states. On one level the control of knowledge production can be considered in terms of 'soft' or 'disciplinary' power, where others are co-opted into a neo-imperial program, rather than coerced. Some commentators, such as Simon Marginson, have argued that recent decades have witnessed an increasing democratisation of knowledge and cite the entry of East Asian countries, such as China, into the upper echelons of university league tables as evidence of a weakening of Western or Anglo-American influence and control of knowledge production (Marginson 2014). Challenges to the status quo include: communications technologies, which have allowed greater access and transfer capability of data and knowledge; cross border partnerships in research; increasing indigenous capacity in higher education in many countries; and the emergence of more autonomous higher education systems in many countries. Other commentators have been less optimistic, noting that competition to control the means of production of academic knowledge has been largely restricted to a small group of newly industrialised East Asian nations, such as Japan, China, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea. Further, these nations have uncritically adopted Anglo-American tertiary education policies and standards to promote 'quality' and internationalise their tertiary education sectors. In this way, globalisation of higher education can be viewed in terms of neo-colonial processes that maintain patterns of dependency and reinforce traditional power structures and ideologies (Lo 2011).

We consider it no coincidence that there was an intensification of audit regimes in the Anglo-American university sector during the 1990s, which occurred under the guise of ensuring standards of academic quality and competition. University and journal league tables, citation indexes and other performance measures can be viewed as a global movement which only reinforced Anglo-American hegemony in knowledge production, while knowledge markets became increasingly globalised in a neo-liberal economic environment (Amsler and Bolsmann 2012).

It is in addressing these qualitative imbalances in global social science that southern theory is primarily concerned. Drawing on Connell's work, Carrington Hogg and Sozzo (2016) have called for a de-colonization and democratization of criminological knowledge, which, they argue, has privileged the epistemologies of the global North. In order to elucidate the power relations embedded in criminological knowledge, they propose highlighting certain forms and patterns of crime distinct to the global periphery, a challenge which this special issue takes up. Such a project, it is contended, would assist in countering universalising tendencies in the social sciences, which present concepts, methods and ideas as timeless and placeless. They state: 'Southern criminology aims to rectify these omissions by adding new and diverse perspectives to criminological research agendas to make them more inclusive and befitting the world in which we live' (Carrington Hogg and Sozzo 2016: 2). They further assert that southern criminology is distinct from post-colonial theories in that it is not so much oppositional, as it is a series of projects of retrieval:

While we take issue with the northernness of criminological assumptions, we attempt to avoid the reductionism that characterizes some sweeping post-colonial critiques of social science by articulating the theoretical foundations of a southern criminology as a redemptive project. In this sense, our purpose is distinguished from the post-colonial project of epistemological and ontological disobedience and insurrection, where redemption is neither a conceptual or political possibility (Carrington Hogg and Sozzo 2016: 2)

It is important to stress that it is not an oppositional or rejectionist project. As some of the contributions here remind us, all societies are marked by centre/periphery relationships and hierarchies, reminding us that North/South should be regarded not simply or primarily as a geographical divide so much as a metaphor for power relations that are pervasive. At the same time, dominant northern and hegemonic theories and accounts are often limited by their own



restricted 'northern' gaze, failing to fully appreciate, if they acknowledge it at all, the effects of imperial context and entwined histories on their own societies and institutions. This special issue provides a space for interaction between diverse global voices in criminology.

For example, the dominant narrative in punishment and society scholarship, an exciting and flourishing sub-field within criminology, is centred on endogenous penal developments around the penitentiary and Foucault's 'carceral system'; it almost totally overlooks the role of penal policy as imperial statecraft in the modern world, the use of transportation by many European states and the impact, not only in the colonial periphery but also on penal policies and practices in the metropole itself. We have long approached the South through a northern gaze. There may be much to be learnt from turning a southern gaze not only on the South but also back on the North. Can an understanding of contemporary US mass incarceration and 'penal exceptionalism' be adequately grasped without reference to the history of the forced removal of millions of Africans to the Americas, as the foundation of a slave-based plantation economy in the American South? This is also a reminder that a southern criminology, as the contributions here highlight, also reinforces the healthy tendency within some criminology to look outward for intellectual renewal to other academic fields, in this case including fields like migration studies, labour history, comparative colonial studies and post-colonial theory.

Connell's (2007, 2014) work not only problematizes the dominance of Northern theory, but also indicates that there are alternatives which have been produced in colonized and post-colonial societies. In this special issue of the journal a diverse array of issues from or connected with the global South are explored by authors from and/or researching in five different continents. Labelling this a special issue, however, should not distract from the sense in which this (international) journal has a robust general commitment to this project in its various intellectual, political and practical aspects. It was established as an open access journal with the purpose of both encouraging engagement by authors and readers from across the globe and building networks of scholars with a shared concern for issues affecting the global South. Its editorial board comprises 51 leading scholars from 14 countries and five continents, with plans to further increase and broaden that membership. In 2016 over two-thirds of authors (70 per cent) were from countries other than Australia, the publication base, with rapidly increasing numbers of submissions from around the world. From its first issue in late 2012 to late 2016 there have been over 220,000 abstract views and more than 148,000 article downloads, with a four-fold increase in both in the last two years.

Increased connectivity creates increased opportunities to democratize knowledge production but, as the earlier analysis makes clear, there is much more to be done. It also behoves us to recognize and seek to address other divisions that cut across North/South inequalities. One of these relates to language. It is hardly a revelation that the English language dominates in the global organisation of knowledge, as the earlier visualisations also powerfully confirm. This advantages countries in the global South, such as Australia. In this regard the journal is committed to supporting the translation and publication of articles, whether original or previously published in non-English language journals. Several original articles in this special issue have been translated for publication. It is intended that future issues will include English translations of previously published non-English language works.

*Correspondence:* Professors Russell Hogg, John Scott, Máximo Sozzo, Crime and Justice Research Centre, School of Justice, Faculty of Law, Queensland University of Technology, 2 George Street, Brisbane 4000 QLD, Australia. Emails: russell.hogg@qut.edu.au; j31.scott@qut.edu.au; msozzo@fcjs.unl.edu.ar

*Please cite this article as:*

Hogg R, Scott J and Sozzo M (2017) Special edition: Southern criminology – guest editors’ introduction. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 6(1): 1-7. DOI: 10.5204/ijcjsd.v6i1.395.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence](#). As an open access journal, articles are free to use, with proper attribution, in educational and other non-commercial settings. ISSN: 2202-8005

## References

- Altbach P (1987) *Higher Education in the Third World: Themes and Variations*. New Delhi: Sangham Books.
- Amsler S and C Bolsmann (2012) University ranking as social exclusion. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 33(2): 283-301. DOI: 10.1080/01425692.2011.649835.
- Beckert S (2014) *Empire of Cotton – A New History of Global Capitalism*. Allen Lane.
- Carrington K, Hogg R and Sozzo M (2016) Southern criminology. *British Journal of Criminology* 56(1): 1-20. DOI: 10.1093/bjc/azv083.
- Chapman B (2011) ERA threat to policy debate. *The Australian*, 25 May.
- Connell R (2007) *Southern Theory: The Global Dynamics of Knowledge in Social Science*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Connell R (2014) Using southern theory: Decolonizing social thought in theory, research and application. *Planning Theory* 13(2): 210-223. DOI: 10.1177/1473095213499216.
- de Sousa Santos B (2014) *Epistemologies of the South*. London, Paradigm Publishers.
- Graham M, Hale SA and Stephens M (2011) *Geographies of the World’s Knowledge*. Flick CM (ed.). London, Convoco! Edition.
- Haddow G and P Genoni (2010) Citation analysis and peer ranking of Australian social science journals. *Scientometrics* 85(2): 471-487. DOI: 10.1007/s11192-010-0198-4.
- Hilbert M (2016) The bad news is that the digital access divide is here to stay: domestically installed bandwidths among 172 countries for 1986-2014. *Telecommunications Policy* 40: 576-581. DOI: 10.1016/j.telpol.2016.01.006.
- Larivière V, Haustein S and Mongeon P (2015) The oligopoly of academic publishers in the digital era. *Plos One* 10(6): e0127502. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0127502.
- Lo W (2011) Soft power, university ranking and knowledge production: Distinctions between hegemony and self-determination in higher education. *Comparative Education* 47(2): 209-222. DOI: 10.1080/03050068.2011.554092.
- Marginson S (2014) The West’s global HE hegemony – Nothing lasts forever. *University World News: The Global Window on Higher Education* 313.
- Roberts J (2009) The global knowledge economy in question. *Critical perspectives on international Business* 5(4): 285-303. DOI: 10.1108/17422040911003033.
- Royle P (1994) A citation analysis of Australian science and social science journals. *Australian and Academic Research Libraries* 25(3): 162-171. DOI: 10.1080/00048623.1994.10754889.
- Straumann R and Graham M (2016) Who isn’t online? Mapping the ‘Archipelago of Disconnection’. *Regional Studies, Regional Science* 3(1): 96-98. DOI: 10.1080/21681376.2015.1116960.